

House Health Policy Committee  
Testimony in Support of House Bill 5668

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**My name is Jennifer Burch and I am here to support House Bill 5668.**

**On August 12, 2012, we were thrown into the world of life threatening food allergies when my then 10 month old son had a couple of small licks of a chocolate and peanut butter frozen yogurt. His little body rejected the peanut butter so violently that he vomited, cramped, broke out in hives, coughed, and started swelling up within the first 30 minutes of those few tiny licks of a common and popular frozen treat.**

**We were fortunate enough to get him to the hospital in time to receive an injection of epinephrine almost immediately upon arriving at the emergency room. Please let me emphasize that we were extremely lucky because the time between ingesting the yogurt to the time he received the epinephrine was a little over an hour. It could have been much worse. You have probably seen the stats already and aware of this but research has shown that delays can result in death in as little as 30 minutes. I thank God every day that my son did not become a statistic.**

**Fast forward to a few months ago. I am experiencing adult onset food allergies. Wheat, Milk and Beef are on the list of foods that I cannot eat. These are things that I have eaten my whole life but now they make me violently ill. Tests at this time are inconclusive which unfortunately, is not that uncommon.**

**One of the problems with diagnosing food allergies is that there aren't any definitive tests available. A history of actual reactions will always be more reliable than either skin and blood tests. Why do I mention this? Because I want to emphasize that food allergies are not just restricted to children or people who have had them their whole life.**

**Food allergies are developing in otherwise healthy individuals who have no idea that they may suddenly experience an allergic reaction while on their anniversary dinner date or at lunch with some coworkers. I know literally hundreds of adults who developed adult onset food allergies.**

**For me, I can say that the earliest symptoms seemed like anything but a reaction and could be easily explained - until they couldn't. I have not had an anaphylactic reaction yet but I'm in, let's call it fortunate position, in that I am well aware of food allergies. I know the signs to watch and so I knew something was changing in my body and was able to pinpoint the foods that causing me issues.**

**Not everyone will have that same personal background to guide them and I hope that those who have a sudden reaction are in a place where they can receive immediate help.**